

6.0 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION



Consultation and coordination with both the public and agencies are important steps in gathering the concerns of the people most affected by the proposed project.

6.1 *Public Involvement*

The public involvement portion of the project included three steps: participant recruitment, focus group sessions, and a scoping meeting. Each step was used to gather feedback regarding the proposed shuttle system. Comments received were taken into consideration and integrated into the planning process.

6.1.1 PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT

Focus group participants were recruited by contacting stakeholders in the extensive project database and by outreaching to local shoppers at a nearby shopping center. Participants were selected based on criteria set forth in the Focus Group Plan. These criteria consisted of age, race/ethnicity, gender, geographic location, recreational activities, and the level of familiarity with the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA) (Users/Potential Users).

6.1.2 FOCUS GROUPS SESSIONS

Two focused groups sessions were held on Saturday, November 10, 2001 at the Michael Landon Recreation Center located at 24250 Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu, California. The morning session was held from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., and the afternoon session was held from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. National Park Service and Parsons Brinckerhoff staff were present at both sessions to answer questions.

Morning Session

The morning focus group session consisted of current users of the SMMNRA. A total of 17 participants attended the morning focus group session and ranged in age, race/ethnicity, and geographical area.

General issues concerned connectivity to the larger transit system, parking, safety, education, shuttle amenities, ticket fares, station amenities, park-and-ride locations, bus headways, location of bus yard, schedule phasing, and type of vehicle.

Afternoon Session

The afternoon session consisted of potential users of the SMMNRA. A total of 13 participants were in attendance and differed in age, race/ethnicity, and geographical area.

The meeting attendees expressed concerns regarding the following general topics: type and size of the vehicle, station amenities, proposed stations, bus headways, ticket fares, park-and-ride locations, access to restaurants and shops, shuttle amenities, and the need to make the shuttle attractive and educational so visitors will use it as an alternative to driving cars.

For a report detailing the age race/ethnicity and geographical area of the focus group participants, refer to Appendix E. This appendix also lists the specific comments submitted by the attendees.

6.1.3 SCOPING MEETING

A scoping meeting was held on November 14, 2001 at the Agoura Hills/Calabasas Community Center between 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. Prior to the meeting, an agenda was mailed to the general public, community groups, and agency personnel describing the purpose of the meeting and requesting comments regarding the proposed project. A tear-out 'Comments' page was also attached for concerned parties who could not make the meeting, but wanted to submit written comments by mail. The mailing list and agenda can be found in Appendix E. Representatives from NPS, as well as Parsons Brinckerhoff staff, were in attendance to address comments and answer questions.

Seven persons from public agencies and local community groups attended the scoping meeting: Only verbal comments were given at the meeting; no written comments were submitted by the meeting attendees. General comments from the meeting included:

- Participants agreed that the shuttle system was a great idea.
- Participants would like NPS to not look solely at the financial aspect, although making the fare too expensive would discourage ridership.
- Financial incentives and educational opportunities should be encouraged, especially at the start, to encourage ridership.
- One-hour wait times may be too long to wait and may discourage potential users.
- One attendee suggested that a "through" route across SMMNRA be considered to allow for "through hiking opportunities."
- The bus should be able to hold 20 people, as it was noted that typical Sierra Club groups range between 15-20 people.
- NPS should consider a "water shuttle" such as a boat trip between the Santa Monica Pier and Malibu Pier to complement the bus shuttle, thereby connecting people from the beaches to the canyons.

Questions were also raised regarding bus headways, ticket pricing, ADA compliance, criteria of service success, alternate routes and parking.

A detailed description of the scoping meeting notes is located in Appendix E.

6.2 Coordination

Coordination between NPS, responsible agencies (California State Parks, Los Angeles County Department of Beaches and Harbors), and other affected agencies has been on-going for the past year.

6.2.1 INTERAGENCY MEETING

An interagency meeting was held on December 4, 2001 specifically for discussion of the Preferred Alternative. Discussion items included routes and service concepts, schedules, equipment, and operations. Attendees included representatives of California State Parks, Los Angeles County Department of Beaches and Harbors, MTA, City of Calabasas, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and the City of Malibu.

Coordination will continue throughout the environmental process, the final design phase, and construction of the improvements.